

THE BUGLE

NEWSLETTER OF THE BALTIC DEFENCE COLLEGE



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Commandant's Foreword

Dear Colleagues,

I am very glad to be back at the Baltic Defence College (BALTDEFCOL), this time at the position of the Commandant which I assumed on 8th of August when also the Joint Command and General Staff Course 2016/2017 started which was prepared by my predecessor and his staff. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Major General Vitalijus Vaikšnoras for his great leadership and to express my appreciation for the excellent professional work of all the staff members who developed courses, planned activities and prepared events for the current academic year.

Also I would like to thank those in the Ministries of Defence and in the college who provided their dedicated work for the creation of the BALTDEFCOL Development Plan 2017 – 2025 which was recently approved by the Ministers of Defence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It is now our task to put the plan into reality.

Following the guidance of the document our main efforts will be to meet customer's requirements, to continue the improvement of the quality of education and to connect

curricula with real world developments thereby ensuring attractiveness of the college not only for us but for our allies and partners as well.

In October 2016 members of our management group met with decision makers, military leaders and educational experts from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to specify educational requirements and to set the conditions for the academic year 2017/2018 planning guidance. As a result of the meeting BALTDEFCOL will continue to focus on the preparation of senior officers for joint level assignments, establish a right balance between homeland defence, NATO Article 5 scenarios and crisis management operations. Special attention will be paid to regional defence issues and to enhance our knowledge on Russia's strategy, military doctrine, capabilities and operations. Furthermore we need to enhance our student's qualification in the field of defence and project management and, in the context of NATO's Warsaw Summit decisions, thoroughly develop education in the area of cyber domain, communication and information systems, electronic warfare and technological innovation. It was agreed to conduct this kind of meetings at least bi-annually in order to review requirements and update curricula.

After I am at the College now for almost half a year, it is a pleasure to see that the ship has set sails and is pursuing the right course. The academic year 2016/2017 has been successful until now. Our 57 students from 14 nations at the JCGSC are well developing and highly motivated to benefit until graduation day in June 2017 as much as possible from the education for their future assignments.



In this Issue:

Commandant's Foreword	1
Senior Leader's Course	3
Civil Servants Course	4
Joint Command and	5
General Staff Course	
Hall of Fame	6
Academic Activities	7
Tracking NATO's revival:	8
From Warsaw to Brussels	
Cyber Security Conference	9
Baltic Defence Innovation	10
Conference	
Baltic Defence Study Tour	11
Introducing Estonia	12
Honouring Fallen	13
Comrades	
Traditional Challenge Cup	14
Teambuilding through	14
Athletics	
International Night	15
BALTSPOUSES Activities	17

Commandant's Foreword

From 28th of November to 2nd of December 2016 the 2nd Senior Leaders Course offered high level continuing education for 15 participants from seven nations. According to the feedback which we received the concept, agenda, topics and execution were very much appreciated, not least because of the excellent performance of the Senior Mentor, General (ret.) Hans-Lothar Domröse, the many interesting discussions and the opportunity to socialize and enhance networking. Participants of this SLC were invited explicitly from partner nations who participate in NATO's enhanced Forward Presence in the wider Baltic region.

On 15th December 2016 our seven students of the "new Civil Servants Course" from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will graduate in the White Hall of the Tartu University Museum and we are looking forward to their feedback on the pilot curriculum, in particular on our effort to take the JCGSC and CSC curricula towards a higher level of synthesis and integration.

On 9th of January 2017 students of the Higher Command Studies Course 2017 will join us and I know the course staff has done its best to make it high quality, interesting, challenging and beneficial. I would like to already extend a warm welcome to the incoming students!

We have had numerous international visitors from the fields of politics, diplomacy, military leadership, education and research institutions as well as from other social spheres, providing students and staff with valuable insights into their areas of responsibility and ensuring up-to-date exchange of opinion on topical questions. For the benefit of our education, to underline the importance of international cooperation and the visibility and recognition of BALTDEFCOL we will continue to host and promote these visits. Talking about cooperation – the opening dinner for the SLC, co-hosted by the

Tartu City Council and the generous offer by Tartu University to conduct the graduation of the CSC in their Museum are just two good examples on how modern and attractive institutions should work together and we are looking for more cooperation opportunities of mutual benefit in general.

I would also like to emphasize the very close and outstanding cooperation with the hosting nation Estonian Defence Forces that ranges from high quality staff personnel through cooperative facility management to providing all kind of other indispensable services for the successful conduct of educational and administration work.

Besides all professional matters it's very important to follow the principle in our Code of Conduct to involve families, socialize, support each other and do things together. At this point I would like to thank everyone – students, staff members and families – for being so active in applying this principle. BALTDEFCOL's International Night event on 4th of November 2016 was the most visible example for me and of course our BALTSPOUSES activities as well. For those of you who wonder about the new name instead of BALTGIRLS, there is a simple explanation. Since this year, a male spouse is participating in this group for the first time. Without any doubt, our families are the ones who make us feel comfortable at home and who provide the conditions for us to carry out our responsibilities in the best way. On behalf of the Baltic Defence College thank you very much to for your great support and understanding.

Let me conclude by thanking everybody for his or her dedicated contribution to develop the college and to continue this development next year. In this spirit I am wishing you and your families happiness, health and success in your private, as well as in your professional life. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2017!



Major General Andis Dilāns
Commandant of the Baltic Defence College

Senior Leaders' Course 2016

By Colonel Albertas Dapkus, Director of SLC

Senior Leaders' Course (SLC) 2016 was organized by the Baltic Defence College for the second time from 28 November – 02 December 2016 as integral constituent continuing education for political and strategic leaders.

It has been developed to prepare them for future challenges within evolving security environment by improving their strategic vision and enhancing their capacity to better lead and manage their respective institutions. It was designed for Flag Officers and their civilian equivalents. The course was conducted at the highest level of professional military education standards. It was developed upon the Baltic Defence College's relationships with other prestigious military and civilian education institutions to assist in the delivery of the programme and in securing high-level contributions from guest speakers.

In 2016, the programme for the SLC focused on areas related to the understanding of the nature of contemporary security challenges, particularly in relation to the NATO, the Warsaw Summit and the move towards active deterrence in the Wider Baltic region. This provided participants with an opportunity to nurture new insights into the geopolitical challenges and hybrid threats facing the Euro-Atlantic community, enhancing their strategic thought to maximise the potential of the institutions they lead. Participants were given the possibility to share ideas with senior leaders from different countries, expanding a network of contacts in allied and partner states that operates in similar situations in our common futures. We invited participants to this course from EU and NATO countries mostly focusing on those nations contribution to the Enhanced Forward Presence in the Baltic region.



At the SLC 2016 we had representatives from Canada, Denmark, Germany, Poland and of course from 3 Baltic States (EST, LVA, EST). Additionally, we

had two representatives from civil society (Chief Opinion Editor, Eesti Päevaleht and Head of Foreign Desk, Postimees). Total number of SLC 2016 participants was 15. Such a multinational composition significantly enhanced the value of the course as it was allowing sharing experiences of such high ranking civil and military leaders.

It was underpinned by presence of as many as 14 distinguished guest speakers coming from 8 different countries. The SLC 2016 had Visiting Senior Mentor – **Gen. (R) Hans-Lothar Domröse** former commander of JFC Brunssum. The overall contribution of the Senior Mentor was outstanding and his active participation added significant value to the Course.



SLC 2016 participants evaluated course as very good to excellent and the college was praised for perfectly organised event. The participants noted a good choice of relevant topics discussed and fine balance between theoretical and practical issues addressed during the course.

SLC 2016 is over and Baltic Defence College is starting planning for the next event – Senior Leaders' Course 2017 that is expected to be arranged at the end of November/beginning of December 2017.



Civil Servants Course 2016

By Mr. Hannes Möllits, Director of CSC

After a break of 1.5 years and an overhaul of the curriculum, Civil Servants Course has made a reinvigorated come-back to College. The 7 Civil Servants of our CSC 2016 graduated on 15 December.



This year's group is diverse, engaged and bright. Every student has brought something unique to the table and enriched not only him or herself, but the rest of the Civil Servants Course - and also the Joint Command and General Staff Course - as well.

The students have been often taken outside of their 'comfort zone' - pushing them forward to show their full potential and evolve through the process. For civil servants, no doubt the toughest task has been to work together with their military counterparts on Allied Joint Operations. This module, one of the four



which is meant for both the JCGSC and CSC, has been guided by LtCol (ret) Uģis Romanovs. Analysis of operational factors has been quite a change from the usual work of preparing talking points at the ministries. Nevertheless, this is exactly what the Civil Servants Course is about - offering a glimpse to the military part of defence, exposing your minds to different kind of thinking and also applying civilian thinking to military problems thus enriching the JCGSC's discussions.

This year's students got a chance to travel twice within the Baltic region. They participated at the

Baltic Defence Study Tour which took them to the ministries of defence of the three Baltic states and to relevant armed forces bases in the region. Besides the study tour however, CSC took part in Riga Conference 2016. Taking part in such high-level event offered a close-up view on many thought-



provoking discussions. Looking through course director's lense, one could tell that the students had a surge of new ideas in the weeks following the conference. Besides that of course the conference offered additional opportunities to network- and what was especially appreciated - enabled some students to actually educate the next generation, our youth, about civil service and international security at the Future Leaders Forum.

Since this year's students all had very diverse backgrounds, it was a huge pleasure to not only have them here as students, but as lecturers as well. Ms Maarja Naagel and Ms Raima Zvirgzda - from Estonian and Latvian Ministry of Defence respectively - were kind enough to give a lecture to their fellow students on the topics they know best. These were of great quality and were appreciated by the rest of the class. These lectures offered Ms Naagel and Ms Zvirgzda an opportunity to test their abilities in an academic environment and they succeeded with ease - so perhaps we are going to see them back at the college in the future as well?!

Special thanks go to the class leader of Civil Servants Course 2016 - **Mr Donatas Eidintas** from Lithuanian Ministry of National Defence. Mr Eidintas leadership has been formidable. He has not only been a well functioning link between the course director and students, but has been a fair leader, has had initiative himself and has also been able to harness the initiative of others. All that has made the course better and smoother for everybody.





Joint Command and General Staff Course 2016/2017

By Colonel Mark Hollis, Course Director JCGSC



With the end of the first semester's horizon and final preparation for exams occurring, a short but critical breather is well deserved to help students stay mentally fit and focused for the next term. Christmas break is a great time to reconnect with families and take time to relax and reflect.

The JCGSC course started in August with 57 students from 14 different nations has created many opportunities and challenges that solidified the bonds between nations and allowed for all to learn. Reading books, writing academic study papers, participating in study trip, engaging in thought-provoking lectures and syndicate activities, attending voluntary roundtable seminars, taking challenging exams have all shaped the students' educational outcome. I trust it has increased their knowledge and spurred the desire to be a lifelong learner. Therefore, it has been central to the first semester to create conditions for establishing an environment for sharing experiences and acquiring the necessary knowledge for next semester – especially during the application period / exercises. I am also excited to work with many of you during the studies to exchange ideas on how we can continue to meet your developmental needs.

Needless to say, the achievements of the course have been made possible only thanks to the hard work and enthusiasm of our staff. Because of them, we are on schedule for completing the course successfully in June 2017. So let's continue to work closely for an exciting and productive summer semester.

Additionally, it was my pleasure to have the seven civil servants for three months nested with the Joint Course. During this short period, the civil-military engagement brought fresh prospective and added the necessary comprehensiveness to the course. With their graduation approaching, I would like to wish them the best of luck.

JCGSC and CSC students participating in lectures and roundtables



Finally, I would like to recognise the student leadership, first under lead of **MAJ Vilius Zagurskis** and later under **MAJ Valiļijs Gračovs**, for their hard work and commitment to the students' body.

Also, I would like to congratulate some of our students for certain extra-curricular activities. During the first six months 5 children were born to a course. Congratulations to the respective families. The second semester in 2017 awaits us...until then... enjoy your holidays with your friends and family! Have a safe and restful Merry Christmas, and I look forward to your all returning in the New Year.

Hall of Fame

By Ms. Maris Pütsepp, Information Manager

At the beginning of 2016 BALTDEFCOL Hall of Fame was established with Commandant's Order 3/08.01.2016. As it is stated, its purpose is to provide prestigious and visible means of recognition to Graduates of the Baltic Defence College who have attained, through military merit, the highest positions in their nation's armed forces, or who have held an equivalent position by rank or responsibility in a ministry.

On 15th December, **Mr. Romualds Ražuks**, Member of Latvian Parliament „Saeima“ became the fourth member of the Hall of Fame.

Mr. Ražuks is the graduate of the BALTDEFCOL Higher Command Studies Course 2004.



Academic Activities

By Ms. Maris Pütsepp, Information Manager

On 17th and 18th October BALTDEFCOL with close cooperation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania organised an **Educational Requirements Seminar** in Vilnius. The event was organized with the kind assistance of Lithuanian Ministry of National Defence and Lithuanian Armed Forces.



On 14th November BALTDEFCOL in cooperation with University of Tartu organised a seminar on **Civil-Military Relations**. The seminar was facilitated by the distinguished guest speaker from U.S. Naval War College, Dr. Rebecca L. Schiff.



On 21st November, BALTDEFCOL hosted a roundtable seminar titled **"America and NATO: Alliance or 'Amerexi'?"** by Col. (ret.) Dr. Charles 'Chuck' Parker.



Tracking NATO's revival: From Warsaw to Brussels

By Ms. Triin Ott, Academic Assistant, Department of Political and Strategic Studies

On 22nd November 2016, the Baltic Defence College, in cooperation with the Institute for European Studies, and with the financial support of NATO's Public Diplomacy Division, organised a public roundtable with a view to assessing the outcomes of the Warsaw Summit and paving the way forward to the Brussels Summit in the spring of 2017.

The Roundtable included three separate panels, during what the panelists turned attention to the situation where we are today as well to the immediate future.



The first panel focused on how reassurance has changed into deterrence. **Lt. Gen. Heinrich Brauss**, **Mr. David A. Shlapak** and **Dr. Vaidotas Urbelis** drew attention to the importance of the Warsaw Summit's decisions, for instance, the decision to move the multinational battlegroups to the Baltic States and Poland. The panelists found that the Russian Federation challenges the current world order while being aggressive and belligerent. Despite the aggressive actions, it was argued by the panel that they did not see any reasons why Russia would risk a conventional war with NATO and with three nuclear powers. The panelists agreed that, considering Russia's actions, collaboration between all the members of NATO should be stronger. Regarding the actions of NATO, the panel agreed that there is a need to increase responsiveness to decide in very short notice and to turn more



Mr. James Rogers, Lt Gen Heinrich Brauss,
Mr. David A. Shlapak and Dr Vaidotas Urbelis

attention to organisational management of the headquarters, to command and control issues.

In addition to the mentioned possibilities, the panelists named potential actions to further deter Russia, mentioning, for example, a potential 'Military Schengen'; to make the spending on defence more transparent as well as to increase defence spending to 3.7%-4% of gross domestic product – the same amount as the US currently spends. The panelists thought it essential for the Baltic States to prepare their infrastructure to enable NATO's swift deployment and to manage better integration with NATO's forces, as well as to increase their STRATCOM capabilities and to think about creating their own anti-access and area denial capabilities.

During the first panel, the panelists also turned their attention to cooperation between the US and the EU. Even though the US president has changed, the panelists argued that cooperation with Washington would continue because both are strong economic partners and close and capable allies.

The second panel focused on countering hybrid warfare. **Mrs. Carmen Romero**, **Mr. Chris Donnelly** and **Lt. Gen. Esa Pulkkinen** explained the concept of hybrid warfare and agreed that readiness to deal with it should be increased.



Mr. Alexander Mattelaer and
Mrs. Carmen Romero

At the same time, the attention is turned to today's leaders and institutions, and their readiness and capabilities to cope with the countering of hybrid warfare. The panelists agreed that the concept of

Tracking NATO's revival: From Warsaw to Brussels

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hybrid warfare is not new but its scale and speed are unprecedented. The second panel was convinced that the aim should be not to provoke a conflict but to prevent it.



Lt Gen Esa Pulkkinen and Mr. Chris Donnelly

To guarantee that effective counter actions to hybrid warfare are implemented, the panelists argued that timely decision making, a long-standing commitment and increasing the intelligence capabilities were essential. Additionally, the significance of strengthening collaboration between NATO and the EU was mentioned, as well as to include other countries (e.g. Moldova, Ukraine, Montenegro) into the cooperation and to increase spending on defence. It was said that spending 2% of gross domestic product on defence was an arbitrary figure.

The third panel focused on the rise of Asia and the future of the West. **Dr. Thomas Mahnken, Ambassador Masafumi Ishii** and **Prof. Christopher Coker** argued about diverse aspects regarding the potential cooperation formats, competition between the great powers and the changes that could take place in future. While referring to great powers, they argued that competition will likely take place between the US, Russia and China. They highlighted that collaboration does not include only military aspects but as well as questions of diplomacy and economy.



Mr. Masafumi Ishii

The third panel discussed also linkages between economics and national security, as well as the fact that trade in general has strong security implications.

The US and its possible future as global leader were brought into question: namely, on the one hand, the panel argued that the US has continued its close cooperation with China on economic matters, but that attention should be turned by the US to overall defence policy. On the other hand, the panel argued about the possibility that the US would lose its leading role everywhere in the future referring to the fact that new norms are emerging in two parallel networks: China and the EU – while Russia may want to stand aside from this. Additionally, concerning aspects that are assumingly taking place in near future, the panel mentioned that China needed to turn more attention to the actions and decisions of India and Japan, which in turn should strengthen their cooperation with the Europe and Asia. It was argued during the third panel that collaboration with NATO desirable and that Asian countries wanted to receive more attention from NATO.



Prof. Christopher Coker

The joint exercise between Japan and NATO was named as important and the Indian Ocean was mentioned as the place where exercises could take place, every two years. Additionally, the panel argued that information about new technologies should be shared more and the domains for cooperation should be extended (e.g. cyber security, missile defence).

All in all, the conference was highly successful, being the first time that the Baltic Defence College co-hosted an event in Brussels, the centre of NATO and the EU.

Cyber Security Conference

By Dr. Kristina Prišmantaitė, Lecturer, Department of Political and Strategic Studies

The Baltic Defence College hosted the Fourth Annual Cyber Security Conference in Riga, Latvia on 26th-27th October 2016.



The Conference focused on integrating the cyber domain into professional military education. The guest speakers represented various institutions including NATO HQ, EDA, NATO CCD COE, US Army Europe, ICDS, NATO StratCom COE, and the Royal Netherlands Army.

The aim of the Conference was to explore educational strategies and methodologies in the cyber area and incorporate different domains. Multidisciplinary approach was proposed, linking the knowledge of development and employment of capabilities that are necessary to operate in cyberspace with their integration and coordination in other operational domains.

The Conference consisted of two panel sessions that addressed different aspects of cyber education and a workshop which was devoted to the exchange of the ideas and experiences of integrating cyber domain into curricula by identifying challenges and best practice standards. The first panel session was devoted to the discussions on the cyber education and training meanwhile the second panel session, which was supported by NATO StratCom COE, addressed the issue of integrating communication and cyber disciplines.

Not only the Conference addressed the key issues of the disciplines of communication and cyber, but also the recommendations for educational institutions were produced.



It was agreed that cyber issues should be integrated into different modules by creating a linkage between cyber and other disciplines. Accordingly, such educational institutions as the Baltic Defence College should take a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach when integrating cyber domain into their curricula. The participants also emphasised the necessity to provide military and civilian officers with the knowledge that would allow them to understand cyber effects and the measures that were needed to be taken in consideration in order to protect their information systems.

Another key issue addressed in the Conference was the need of integrating cyber defence exercises into other exercises that were conducted by professional military institutions as a part of educational activities. It is necessary to show the officers that cyber issues are practical and not 'mystical'. Therefore, it is important to introduce scenario driven exercises that would help translate cyber issues into their roles and experiences.



The Conference received a positive feedback from participants and speakers who showed an interest in attending the future events organised by the Baltic Defence College as well as establishing opportunities for cooperation.

Baltic Defence Innovation Conference

By Dr. Asta Maskaliūnaitė, Lecturer, Department of Political and Strategic Studies



Defence innovation is becoming more and more important in a volatile and unpredictable security environment that the Baltic states find themselves in. This is especially the case after the annexation of Crimea and the wars in Eastern Ukraine. The size of the three countries and their populations do not allow the three states to develop massive armed forces, therefore the need to use the best innovative technologies to turn tables on potential adversaries and to deter the potential aggressions is palpable. Fortunately, though the countries are not large and do not possess limitless natural resources, they can count on the brain power of their citizens to act as a force multiplier.

The Second Conference on the Baltic Defence Innovation that took place in Vilnius 7-9 December, 2016 was meant to foster this climate of improvement as well as innovation in defence and add to the creation of robust networks that promote the new developments in the field. Organized by the Baltic Defence College and financed by the Lithuanian Ministry of Defence, the event drew in 150 participants from all over Europe and the United States.

The conference was organized into seven sessions. It started from the discussion of experience of



Dr. Panagiotis Kikiras,
European Defence Agency

European Defence Agency and their potential support for the innovative projects in the European space. It continued with the diversity of experiences in defence-industry cooperation from Norway and Ukraine, providing a very useful context in which to place the innovative developments of the three Baltic states.

The next session addressed the role of innovative thinking in military and non-military education alike and the potential for collaboration between civilian and defence sectors in coming up with the solutions for various issues in defence.

The three parallel panel sessions addressed these issues with more concrete examples, presenting projects in enhancing situational awareness, energy sustainability, automated systems, and addressing the prospects of dual-use technologies as well as issues of host nation support. The evening session connected through the VTC the NATO Innovation Hub and showed the many project the organization is running, some of which are particularly useful for the military education. The last session of the conference came back the full circle and presented the experiences of three Baltic states defence industry associations in industry-defence sector collaboration.



LTC Sten Allik,
ENDC



Mr. Agris Dundurs, Federation of Security and Defence Industries of Latvia, Mr. Ron Nulkes, Dutch Defence Industry Association, Mr. Ričardas Sartatavičius, Lithuanian Defence and Security Industry Association, Mr. Mindaugas Pauliukas, National Defence Industries Association and Mr. Ingvar Pärnamäe, Estonian Defence Industry Association

The conference also served as a platform for cooperation between the potential contributors to the Baltic states' defence, not only the armed forces themselves and the policy makers, but also the civilian sector: the inventors at the private enterprises and the researchers at the universities. The numerous projects presented showed clearly the potential of the Baltic defence innovation and the companies participating in the exhibition were providing a hands-on experience of the Baltic defence industry.

At the end of the conference, the torch for organizing the event was handed over to Latvia and it is expected to take place again in 2018.

Baltic Defence Study Tour

By Major Michael G. Middents, JCGSC 2016–2017

The student body of the Baltic Defence College's Joint Command and General Staff Course completed the course's Baltic Defence Study Tour from 17 to 21 October 2016 as part of the course's International Security module, focused on the formulation and implementation of defence policy.

The tour took students from 14 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Partnership for Peace (PfP) nations out of the classroom and gave them first-hand exposure to defence policy experts from Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian defence forces.



The tour began with a full day at the Lithuanian Ministry of Defence in Vilnius, where Vice-Minister of Defence **Mr. Marijus Vilicka** welcomed students with an overview of current Lithuanian defence focuses and priorities. Students then heard from Lithuanian defence experts on subjects including national defence policy making and implementation, recent defence developments, countering hybrid threats and the newly formed NATO force integration unit, a product of NATO's 2016 Warsaw Summit.

The tour continued to Siauliai Air Base in northern Lithuania, where students were able to see the academic side of their studies in action. **Major Irmantas Braziulis** provided an overview of airfield operations and capabilities. Students then received an up-close look at French Mirage 2000 fighter aircraft stationed at Siauliai to perform NATO's air



policing mission. While only a few kilometres into the next leg of the tour, students observed as the same fighter jets they just toured scrambled overhead.

The following day, **Mr. Raimonds Bergmanis** welcomed students to Latvia's Ministry of Defence. There, students learned about Latvian national defence policy, crises management and NATO's Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence. Following the Ministry of Defence, students toured Adazi Military Base, where they learned about the Latvian Armed Forces' operational planning and became familiar with the Latvian Land Force Brigade's structure, activities and initiatives.

The tour concluded in Tallinn, where Estonia's Minister of Defence started a day focused on Estonian defence policy and planning. Students also gained insight into NATO's Tallinn-based Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence. Finally, students visited the Tallinn's Mine Harbour where they were educated on Estonian counter-mining capabilities, completing their sampling of NATO air, land and naval capabilities.

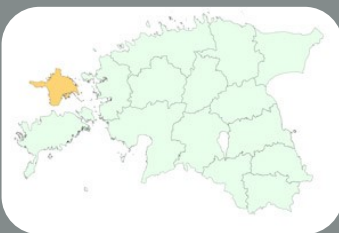
Of course, the tour wasn't all business. After learning from the Baltic States' most senior military leadership and defence experts each day, the students were hosted to dinners by the former Commandant of the Baltic Defence College, **Major General Vitalijus Vaikšnoras** and Brigadier **General Ivo Mogilnijs**. They then set out into the Baltic capitals where Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian students were able to host their peers to the rich cultures and cuisines of the cities they call home.

The Baltic Defence Study Tour was an astounding success, taking full advantage of the Baltic Defence College's unique ability to gather a highly-diverse, multinational group of officers and civilian leaders on NATO's eastern border to strengthen their mutual understanding of NATO policy, plans and joint military operations. Special thanks to **Dr. Douglas Ford** for his expertly planned and flawlessly-executed tour.

Introducing Estonia

By Guna Začeste, JCGSC 2016–2017

Shortly after yet another beginning of the JCGSC school year, students from different nations as well as faculty members and staff were preparing for their first "Discover Estonia" trips. This time the roads led to one of the most beautiful Estonian islands – Hiiumaa. The overall team keen on exploring this island consisted of almost 100 people and turned out to be one of the most memorable experiences from the first semester.



The excursion started with an early rush to the ferry that took BALTDEF COL team to the famous island.



The first impression and surprise that was floating around the group was the fact that actually island is so big. Our first stop – Tahkuna military museum –

gave the opportunity to experience some vivid parts of recent history of Baltics – Soviet and Nazi occupations – and provided some interesting historical facts regarding military equipment and that time capabilities.



One of the favourite island's parts for the whole group turned out to be Tahkuna Lighthouse. The opportunity to climb all the way up and see the island from the top of the Lighthouse provided some breath taking views and probably, almost hundreds of pictures in our cameras.



Great benefit that this trip offered was the experience of local culture's features like national Hiiumaa food, beverages and national dances. At the end of the



day, despite the very intensive sightseeing program and excellent dinner, local dancing group managed to attract almost all trip participants to different kinds of dances that specifically characterized the soul of Hiiumaa inhabitants.

The second day right from the beginning surprised with some great wool shopping for trip participants. The Vaemla wool factory not only demonstrated the full process how the wool products are being made but also gave the opportunity to purchase these products, made from purely organic and ecological wool.



Next in the program followed another lighthouse – Kõpu lighthouse. This lighthouse provided different view on the island and the opportunity to observe the green and forested part of the Hiiumaa island.

At the Hill of Crosses our group had a chance to hear some frightening and legendary stories about the origins of this place – tragic ending of the local weddings. Probably almost everybody was left wondering about the unusual circumstances how this Hill of Crosses was made.

And already after that the wonderful tour guides reminded us about the arrival of ferry which would take our team back to mainland of Estonia. Conversations in the bus were filled with excitement and surprise, since for most of the people this was the first time on Estonian island.



After a very full and intensive program that the BDCOL staff organized, everyone returned home with great exhaustion and wonderful memories. Such trips are not only a way for discovering new and unseen parts of the country we have chosen as our home for this year, but also helps to create fun memories among the students and their families.

Honouring Fallen Comrades

By Major Michael G. Middents, JCGSC 2016–2017

Every year, Lithuanian defence forces stationed at home and deployed around the world honour soldiers and civilians who have died defending or serving their country during the “In Memoriam” running event.

The event occurs during the first week of November, aligned with All Saints’ Day, which is observed on 1 November. All Saints’ Day is a Lithuanian national holiday set apart to honour the souls of deceased family members who are believed to return to churches, cemeteries and homes during this time.

The In Memoriam event is organized annually by the Birutietes Society, an organization dedicated to helping troops and their families through educating youth in patriotism and civic consciousness, fostering Lithuanian customs and traditions, preserving Lithuanian military historical heritage, promoting cultural cooperation and strengthening the role of women in military families. The society invites all Lithuanian defence forces, at home and abroad, to join in this annual memorial event.

This year, 20 runners consisting of officers and families assigned to the Baltic Defence College in Tartu, Estonia joined fellow deployed Lithuanians in Belgium and Afghanistan in observing the event. The group was primarily made up of Lithuanians but also included Latvian, Estonian and American friends. The youngest “runner” was 10-month-old Ieva Zagurskyte, who made sure her father completed the run. The group held a 5K run on Tartu’s snow-covered streets in -7 °C weather as the sun was already on its way down at 15:00.



LtCol Gintaras Koryzna, who organized the local event shared, “The In Memoriam running event is an opportunity to pause and to remember (commemorate) our friends who passed away. Moreover, it provides an opportunity to be together, refresh our friendship and share our feelings as the members of the Armed Forces, as one big family. Today it is nice to see our international colleagues, who joined us and are shoulder to shoulder.”



Traditional Challenge Cup

By Mr. Oliver Toots, Education Support Manager

Another well-established traditional Challenge Cup took place in the middle of bowling lines in the Fun Bowling. Balls have been rolled by College staff several times before, but not in that location.

Decision for current type of sports activity was properly analysed by committee and following points were considered:

- ◆ Overall Physical level of difficulty of sports: suitable for average Joe
- ◆ Possible advantages of other competitors: underground rehearsal or previous career of bowling in Primary School. Observe-committee did not find any evidence of violation of this point.

civil rights were followed in order to avoid potential situation of discrimination.

First round was as warm-up. But after half an hour, official part of contest was opened by sound of starting pistol. Now, it was time to concentrate for real goal and no space for mistakes. There were lots of focusing, commitment, loud thinking and spelling in the air.

Success of throws were easily noticed by impressions of participants. It was impossible not to have joyous victory jumps or victory dance in case of "STRIKE".

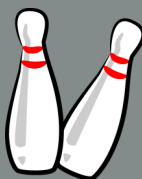
After every round, tired bowlers sat down and shared tips to each other. Best result of three rounds was written down in formal documents.

There was possible cheating, that needed attention. One of contestant had a trainee or assistant with him. Firstly it looked unfair, but as there were no restrictions of that, then this time committee looked through fingers. No disqualification was announced and officially it was recorded as sub-team member.

Otherwise, whole evening was followed by idyllic and friendly atmosphere.

Participants had memorandum of understanding, where they agreed not to publish official results of competition in order not to compromise centre of gravity of that evening.

Everyone enjoyed being out of working environment and socializing to each other. Challenge cup is undoubtedly stands out for its name. Can't wait for next one.



Officers Develop Teambuilding through Athletics

By Major Michael G. Middents, JCGSC 2016–2017

Students of the Baltic Defence College wrapped up roughly five months of athletic teambuilding exercises, culminating with a volleyball tournament on 08 Dec. The college organizes students into roughly 10-student syndicates for the duration of their studies at the college. Through membership in these syndicates, the students establish strong networks with peers across nationalities and across air force, army and navy service components. The networks will provide these officers personal friends in allied and partner nations as they move on to work within NATO and other military organizations, an invaluable benefit relatively unique to the college.

Syndicates spend most of their time working through the challenges of NATO operational planning but are given a weekly opportunity to strengthen their teams out on the sports fields as well. The sports challenge began with an outdoor Ultimate Frisbee tournament, taking advantage of Estonia's summer. With some students highly proficient in the game and others learning it for the first time, teams were forced to solve how best to work together and defeat opposing syndicates.

Following Frisbee, the challenge moved indoors to the volleyball courts. Again, experience in the game and lack thereof was immediately apparent and syndicates worked on communication and coordination to get the ball over the net. Whereas Lithuanians are known for their skill in basketball, the Georgians demonstrated a national knack for volleyball. Of all of the syndicates, Laidoner seemed to figure it out best, claiming victory in both sports' tournaments, even when faced with specially-imported US infantry challengers.

Besides syndicate sports challenges, the college also ensures students have access to extracurricular sporting activities. The college reserves space at a local basketball court to give Lithuanian students access to their beloved national sport. Other students have found membership in mixed martial arts and hockey groups. Additionally, students have been an active part of Tartu's organized biking and running events including the fall marathon. While the sports activities are a fun way for students to blow off steam and work on communication and coordination, they also embody US Gen Douglas MacArthur's observation, "On the fields of friendly strife are sown the seeds that on other days, on other fields will bear the fruits of victory."

International Night

By Major Michael G. Middents, JCGSC 2016–2017

On 4th November The Baltic Defence College (BDC) held its annual International Night this weekend on its snow-covered campus in Tartu Estonia.

Distinguished guests included Major General Andis Dilāns, Commandant, and 12 Ambassadors or other representatives of diplomatic missions to Estonia.

Those in attendance were entertained by Latvian and Estonian folk dancers, Bosnian-Herzegovinian and Moldavian accordion players, the Lithuanian military rock group "Vytis," an American 1950s rock & roll piano presentation, and the Latvian military band.



The event gathers students, staff and guests of the Joint Command and General Staff Course to better appreciate each other's cultures and backgrounds, and there is no better way to do this than by sharing the best foods, drinks and cultural activities from the many homelands they represent.

This year, students and staff of 19 nations brought their cultures' finest for their peers and guests to enjoy.



Attendees also enjoyed traditional foods from 'student and staff's home countries. Each country provided a full spread of traditional meals and desserts. For example, Georgians pleased guests with Georgian wines and khachapuri, Lithuanians proudly served their bankuchenas dessert and the

International Night

By Major Michael G. Middents, JCGSC 2016–2017

Norwegian table served waffles and mink whale. Additionally, Latvians served smoked lamprey, Germans served leberkase, Poles presented a traditional bigos dish and Brits offered samples of Scottish malt whiskey.

Guests also raised over 1,200 euros for charity, led by the spouses' group "Baltgirls." The raised funds were combined with additional funds raised by BDC lecturer Matas Halas during the Tartu Marathon in October and ultimately donated to the Tartu Laste Turvakodu, a local children's shelter.



The event, masterfully planned and run by SGM Peeter Einbaum, was an outstanding success, bringing distinguished visitors, students, staff and local Tartu guests together for a unique multicultural experience.



BALT SPOUSES Activities

16 The Baltspouses started off the new academic year with a welcome event at Wilde restaurant. The event was attended by 20 staff and student spouses. As the event took place before school started, it was also attended by 15 children. Wilde provided an intimate venue for the event, with good Estonian food, sweets and coffee.

AUGUST



8 First coffee morning at Ida Street conference room. The event was well attended by 18 spouses. The spouses all brought a delicious dish to share. Introductions of the various events and opportunities were explored. The main interests were Pilates and English class.

SEPTEMBER

27 English class started at the Ida conference room. Ms Edith Chenault teaches Basic English to 7-10 spouses weekly. Also in attendance are the children and babies of spouses.

6 Jolita Vilciauskiene shared her culinary skills by hosting how to make smoked fish salad. First we went to the market to select the fish suitable for the salad. Then we moved to Ida conference room to prepare the salad. This is a most delicious dish made with Haik smoked fish. We were all so delighted to share the fish salad for lunch.

OCTOBER



NOVEMBER

4 Baltspouses collected 1220 Euros for the Tartu Laste Turvakodu during the International Night event. This charity will get new bunkbeds, and a bus trip to Rakvere with the money. Extra funds will go toward their new playground project.

BALT SPOUSES Activities

NOVEMBER

8 The Baltspouses was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation from the Blind Peoples Association for their donation of musical instruments from 2015. Fattan Lehmann as the presentative of all Baltspouses was happy to accept the award.



10 Crystal Middents shared her talent and expertise by hosting a belly dancing class for Baltspouses. It was well attended, great exercise and fun! An event to be repeated in the coming year.



12 Ursula from Germany shared her family tradition of baking, making, and decorating Christmas cookies. It was a sweet time together, and all who attended went home with the delicious cookies that were decorated by the attendees.



DECEMBER

8 Baltspouses took the train to visit Old Town Tallinn and the traditional Christmas market. A walk about Old Town was enjoyed as well as a delicious lunch.

**It was a very nice half-year for the Baltspouses and we look forward to 2017 with more entertaining meetings and interesting events to come.
Merry Christmas and a happy new year to everyone!**



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Editor:

Ms Maris Pütsepp
maris.putsepp@baltdefcol.org
Tel: +372 717 6004

Baltic Defence College
Riia 12, Tartu
ESTONIA

Pictures by:

Mr Raido Saar
Staff members
Students
BALTSPOUSES